

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell and Alexander Graham Bell to Eliza Symonds Bell, November 22, 1878, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Mrs. Alexander Melville Bell. Cambridge, November 22, 1878. My dear Mrs. Bell;

I am very sorry you have not heard from us before — Wednesday I was lazy and yesterday too anxious — poor Alec. has had a hard time of it. They operated on him Saturday and he went on very well, but yesterday morning after examination they told him that the abcess was so deep seated and so close to the bowels and the passage it had made so narrow that they felt it would be advisable to open the whole thing again and keep it open while the end and inside part healed — It was not absolutely necessary, but they thought it would be far wiser. They wanted to give him other and this Alec. It he must take as the pain had been so frightful. Still be dreaded it so much that he had the operation put off until this morning that I might be with him—. My cousin Miss Blatchford came in with me this morning. We found Alec. very unhappy and dreading both the pain and the ether, finally he decided to stand it. I held his hand and he took it very well but it was fearful. It took but a few moments but a great deal of pain remained, however, when I had to leave him an hour later he was more comfortable, but the Doctors say he will not be able to leave the hospital for a fortnight from Monday. They say he could be moved in three days, but as he has no home of his own to go to he is far better off there than with any friends however kind. Even if he had his own house I doubt if he would be so comfortable as he is there. Everything is as nice as it can be and he is seldom alone except at night. He likes his nurses extremely and threatens not to come back to me at all. He is very glad he came on, it was the most fortunate thing because in Brantford he could not have had the skill and care he had here. The abcess never showed and if he had

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remained might have gone on burrowing into the bowels until too late to stop it. The journey did him no real harm.

I have brought my letter into the hospital and am sitting beside Alec. now He seems pretty comfortable.

My dear Mamma:

I was so sorry to take Mabel and Baby away from you all but there seems so little probability of my getting out of the hospital for many days to come that I felt I could not do without my dear little wife. Thank you very much for the note that Mabel forgot to give me till this morning. Tell Mary Home we can't very well have her while I am here but when we are settled in Washington we will manage to have her there too.

Your loving, Alec.

Alec. wants me to say you must not be alarmed at his not being able to write himself, he has to keep in one position and it is an awkward one to write in. You must not be alarmed about him the worst is over now he has but to lie quiet and all will be well.

Your loving, Mabel.